

Zumwalt attacks SALT treaty

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Washington—The new SALT treaty is a shockingly watered-down version of what the nation's military leaders recommended, a former member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret.), contended yesterday.

Admiral Zumwalt, who was chief of naval operations from 1970 to 1974, said the current military higher command apparently will yield to President Carter's views, stay in office and support the treaty with the Soviet Union despite deep reservations.

But if the Senate compares the joint chiefs' still-secret recommendations with what finally emerged in the strategic arms limitation treaty, he said, it will have "great difficulty in believing" they really support the pact.

Senators "will be shocked at how far their [the chiefs'] views have been watered down" in the course of negotiating with the Russians, Admiral Zumwalt claimed.

One of the remaining mysteries for the coming Senate debate on the so-called SALT II treaty is the position that will be taken—and how forcibly it will be argued,—by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

They are the chairman, Gen. David C. Jones, and the chiefs of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, and they serve as the President's top military advisers. All they have said for themselves is that they are reserving judgment until the treaty is in hand.

Admiral Zumwalt attacked the treaty yesterday in a joint appearance on NBC's Meet the Press program with Senator Jake Garn (R., Utah) and Paul Nitze, a former SALT negotiator and leading critic of the new treaty. Theirs was a sort of rebuttal appearance to that last week on the same program by Cyrus R. Vance, Secre-

tary of State, and Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense.

The Cabinet officers argued that the treaty is equitable, will limit the nuclear arms race and can be policed. The three yesterday argued precisely the opposite.

With its high limits on strategic missile launchers and bombers, they contended, SALT II is not really an arms control agreement at all and, worse, it will further the Soviet pursuit of nuclear superiority.

Specific criticisms were the pact's failure to include the Soviet Backfire bomber as a strategic weapon and its allowance of 308 heavy SS-18 rockets to Russia while the United States is barred from developing any heavy missile.

On the question of verifying Soviet compliance with treaty terms, both Senator Garn and Admiral Zumwalt said it cannot be done. The admiral said Secretary Brown was "grossly optimistic" in estimating that the loss of Iranian monitoring stations could be compensated for in about a year and he urged the Senate to interrogate those who will be responsible for monitoring.

The treaty sets a limit of 2,250 weapons launchers on either side. The critics' point was that the 308 SS-18's alone will give the Soviet Union destructive power superior to America's total.

Mr. Nitze saw such power, combined with superior conventional military forces, as giving the Soviet Union intolerable political advantages in the world arena.

Asked about Mr. Brown's contention that retired officers exaggerate Soviet power while those still in uniform better understand the treaty limitations, Admiral Zumwalt said his "friend" missed a chance to buttress his reputation for accuracy.

He said that active-duty military men are "muzzled."

Asked whether public support for the treaty would be a contradiction of the military leaders' private views, as expressed to the President, Admiral Zumwalt virtually invited the Senate to request the "position papers" submitted by the joint chiefs to the President during the SALT negotiations.

Would endorsement of the pact be "intellectually dishonest?" he was asked.

"No," Admiral Zumwalt replied. "The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have to decide whether or not a decision—made by a President who tells them that there are political factors beyond their purview which must be considered—should be supported or whether they should leave office. I gather that these members believe that they should support, despite their deep reservations, SALT II."

Mr. Nitze, urging Senate amendments to improve the treaty, said that the nuclear balance would become "much more adverse" to the United States during the early 1980's when a SALT III treaty would be under negotiation.

"I can see no possibility that a SALT III treaty will be as favorable as SALT II," Mr. Nitze said, "and SALT II is wholly unfavorable and uneven."